

Code of Ethics for School Board Members

Believing that every child is unique and that all children have differing educational needs and differing potential for which the schools must provide, and further believing that education has traditionally been regarded as a means of improving both the individual and society, Teton School District No. 401 commits itself the following School Board Code of Ethics:

As a member of my local board of trustees, I will strive to improve student achievement in public education, and to that end I will:

Attend all regularly scheduled board meetings insofar as possible, having read my packet ensuring that I am informed about the issues to be considered at the meetings;

Recognize that the board must comply with the Open Meeting Law and only has authority to make decisions at official board meetings;

Render all decisions based on the available facts and each board member's independent judgment, and refuse to surrender that judgment to individuals or special interest groups;

Understand that the board makes decisions as a team. Individual board members may not commit the board to any action unless so authorized by official board action;

Encourage the free expression of opinion by all board members and seek systematic communications between the board and students, staff, and all elements of the community;

Work with other board members to establish effective board policies and to delegate authority for the administration of the schools to the superintendent;

Communicate to other board members and the superintendent expressions of public reaction to board policies and school programs;

Recognize that decisions are made by a majority vote and the outcome should be supported by all board members;

Acknowledge that policy decisions are a primary function of the board and should be made after full discussion at publicly held board meetings, recognizing that authority to administer policy rests with the superintendent;

Be open, fair and honest – no hidden agendas, and respect the right of other board members to have opinions and ideas which differ from mine;

Recognize that the superintendent is the board's advisor and should be present at all meetings, except when the board is considering the superintendent's evaluation, contract or salary;

Understand the chain of command and refer problems or complaints to the proper administrative office while refraining from communications that may create conditions of bias should a district concern ever rise to the attention of the board as a hearings panel;

Keep informed about current educational issues by individual study and through participation in programs providing needed information, such as those sponsored by the state and national school boards association;

Respect the right of the public to be informed about district decisions and school operations;

Understand that I will receive information that is confidential and cannot be shared;

Give staff the respect and consideration due skilled, professional employees and support the employment of those best qualified to serve as district staff, while insisting on regular and impartial evaluation of all staff;

Present personal criticism of district operations to the superintendent, not to district staff or to a board meeting;

Take no private action that will compromise the board or administration;

Refuse to use my board position for personal, family, or partisan gain or prestige. I will announce any conflicts of interest before board action is taken; and

Remember a board member's first and greatest concern must be the educational welfare of the students attending the public schools.

Trustee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Policy History:

Adopted on: August 10, 2009

Revised on: May 14, 2012